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W O R L D

AUGUST

DICTATOR OF THE DRAMA

BY ANDREW BUCHANAN

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Exploring the By-Paths

IT would be ungracious not to acknowledge here the many messages of approval we have received of A.C.W. in its new format. Of course, it would be idle to pretend that the increased legibility and ease of handling have not been secured at a certain sacrifice: but it is one we share with every magazine in these days—namely, further space restrictions. But the new page size permits an economy in make-up which does offset this very considerably; and it is noteworthy that in this issue appear *all* of our popular regular features.

And what of the future? The difficulties attendant on film production have resulted in many amateurs temporarily turning aside from the broad highway of amateur cinematography and exploring the fascinating by-paths—lanes that lead to unexpected delights. To a certain extent this is a good thing, for when there was unlimited film stock available and time was not the essence of the contract, there was little to dissuade us from scorching at break-neck speed along that high road. Some of us were perhaps unmindful of the fact that although it was constructed to enable us to get to our destination as quickly as possible, it is the smaller roads that give the most satisfying glimpses of the countryside.

For the next few months or so, therefore—and until the projection season once again claims most of our attention—we shall explore some of those by-roads, while still not losing sight of the highway. A few of them are not properly made up, so that the going may not at times be any too easy, but at least we can be assured that any effort we may make to strike out a path will be well worth while by reason of the new vistas that will be opened up.

No one, for instance, has yet adequately mapped out the highly important subject of composition. To the still photographer it is one of the most vital aspects of his art, and hundreds of volumes have been written about

it. But there are no books to which the cine worker can go to learn about pictorial composition. Yet a single visit to the cinema will convince him that the professional pays the greatest attention to it.

If a shot is practically static, the 'rules' of still photography for the most part apply; but immediately you introduce movement you change the pattern. We need to know how to fit movement into the frame so that it takes its place as the dominating feature of the design. We need to know how the old 'rules,' which are the heritage of centuries of the art of the painter, can be related to the new medium.

Who can better explain all this than one who is both artist and cinematographer? The series of articles on pictorial composition which will shortly begin in A.C.W. bears the stamp of authority, for it has been written by a well-known artist whose work appears

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GORDON S. MALTHOUSE
Editor

in many of our national collections and who is himself an enthusiastic amateur movie-maker.

A number of readers have on their hands rolls of Agfacolor which they are now unable to get processed in colour. True, it is possible to have them processed in monochrome, but black-and-white is a poor second-best, particularly when one has paid more for one's film than the cost of an equivalent length of monochrome and has probably reserved it for an important subject.

Another of our forthcoming features will tell you how to process the film in colour yourself. (Let those readers who do not care to trust themselves to do the work entirely on their own begin to look around now for someone to whom they can farm it out!) Agfa have never released the details of their process, so that the method described may bear only slight resemblance to theirs, but of the excellence of the results there can be no question.

Our test film showed brilliant gradation compared with the pastel effect characteristic of trade-processed Agfacolor, but if you prefer this softer result, it is easy to secure it by a very slight modification of the formulae.

The encouraging reception accorded the short series on animation for the amateur (which is concluded in this issue) and that on 'special effects' leads us to hope that some notes on how the professional tackles his animation problems will prove of interest to readers. Interest rather than instruction is the keynote of these notes, for, even though one may be quite unable to duplicate the effects for oneself, there is pleasure and profit to be gained from the knowledge of how they are produced.

Visits to the cinema become a richer experience when one is primed with that knowledge. From the study of intermittent and 'trip' mechanisms the reader advances by easy stages to Multiplane and process work; and when the end of the 'course' is reached, Walt Disney will hold few secrets from him.

Mention of visits to the cinema calls to mind our reviews of current professional films, which have appeared from our very first number. We plan to make this feature even more useful and entertaining by including reviews of new short films of interest to the amateur. Now there are many documentary films and the like which never reach the cinemas, so we shall, wherever possible, tell you where you can see them or from whom they can be hired (for many non-theatrical shorts, although made on 35mm. stock, are never shown in that size, but are reduced to 16mm. with the object of reaching the public outside the cinemas).

And that brings us again to the home cinema. Have you yet realised that a great part of the fun of amateur movies lies in the showmanship of the finished product, in the building and running of a miniature theatre in your own home? Next month we shall reproduce photographs of a remarkable little theatre built by a reader—photographs which may suggest to you ways and means of improving your own shows. If you already have a cinema of your own, why not send us pictures and a description of it? It does not need to be an expensive or elaborate one to merit publication; indeed, the simpler the means by which the effects are achieved, the more likely is it to stimulate others into becoming theatre owner-managers.

Of course, if you are able to show sound films, your showmanship gains added lustre; if, however, you do not possess a sound projector but are sufficiently keen to experiment and improvise, you can yet have the satisfaction of giving the screen a voice. Last month we published a letter from a reader on how he converted his 200B to sound. Several correspondents have asked for full working details, so we have arranged for these to be published in an early issue. It should be noted that the system can be adapted to many 9.5mm. and 16mm. projectors and that possession of an amplifier is not essential.

The "Do It Yourself!" articles have rapidly become one of the most popular features of A.C.W. In the heading to each article we write: "Suggestions for gadgets are welcomed." Many amateurs have responded to this invitation since the series began. The gadget that has been asked for most often is an animated viewer.

We are therefore glad to announce that, after some months of experiment, Mr. Gauld has now been able to evolve a satisfactory model that can be made with ordinary hand-tools. A description of it will appear later on in the series, since it is felt that practical notes on camera topics are likely to prove of the most interest and value at the present time. Next month's "Do It Yourself!" by the way, describes the making of a direct vision view-finder.

A short time ago we announced that we had in preparation an account of the apparatus necessary for filming the movements of flowers, enabling the amateur to produce results comparable with those of the admirable "Secrets of Nature" films. Space problems have up till now prevented its appearance, but it is now scheduled for 'early release.' It opens up a fascinating new world—a world that only the camera can reveal; and it does so with the expenditure of the minimum of film stock.

THE EDITOR.

The author at work on a film on first aid. He is seen squatting on the ground in order to get a view of the subject as she will appear on the screen.

DICTATOR OF THE DRAMA

This is the fourth of an important series of articles designed to prepare the way for a New Order in film production. In the first three Mr. Buchanan discussed his first fifteen years as a film-maker, the problems of the news-reel and the advance of documentary film. In the next article in the series, which deals with the ever widening use of 16mm. he expresses the view that the amateur can now plan and make films which should stand a good chance of nation-wide distribution.

By Andrew Buchanan



THE life blood of the commercial cinema is the feature production, though the vitamins in a programme are frequently supplied by short films. Feature producers may be inclined to ignore the short, but no short film-maker, amateur or professional, can afford to be disinterested in the feature. Moreover, he should see it in true perspective, recognising its penetrating powers—how it percolates into every part of the civilized world.

The feature film is, in many respects, a masquerader. It introduces itself, daily, nightly, to millions, with a flourish of trumpets, and fascinates, thrills, amuses and distracts us from the basic problems of life, which it reflects with such seeming accuracy. It is, indeed, the Dictator of Drama in this extremely melodramatic age, when life itself has come to resemble a horrific feature which has no end. The trouble, of course, is that it had a beginning we have forgotten—hence the tangle.

Many who are vaguely visualising world peace think of it only in terms of a return to placidity and apathy. No black-out—no rations—no danger. That attitude is not

merely negative—it is disastrous. Such people either have forgotten, or have never realised, that war is created in times of peace, and not in war time! Consequently, everything in the past which constituted the contemporary scene—everyday life—needs to be scrutinised for the sake of the future, and, most of all, the great media catering for the public, foremost among which is the cinema.

Looking back, I recall ever-increasing artistic and technical values, a deluge of vacuous subject-matter, and, sprinkled here and there, examples of a higher purpose, a determination to make film contribute, in its own dramatic, and entertaining way, to the progress of humanity. I remember, too, how the nations have used features to project their characteristics, their strength, their prestige, and those episodes in their history of which they are proud. Natural enough, extremely interesting, and remunerative.

As the years rolled by, and international discord increased, producers found highly dramatic material in the 'general situation.' Just as 'war films' provided an epilogue to 1918, so films about 'threats to peace' created

a prologue to 1939. With increasing momentum, the cinemas of the world aided the work of moulding the mass mind and preparing it for the calamity now upon us. Exciting interpretations of 'reality' based on international difficulties can but contribute to a future flare-up.

But, throughout that fateful quarter of a century, heralded in and trumpeted out by war, there appears to have been little recognition by the world's film-makers of their great responsibility to the world public, other than to provide 'entertainment.' Today, we know that entertainment is not enough—never has been enough, and never will be.

Entertainment is inextricably mixed up with daily life. It is inspired by it, and film has devised a formula which dramatises and/or glorifies life in such a way that we laugh or weep over other people's problems which are really our own. Therein lies the link between audiences and artistes—between reality and scenario. And that is why the screen is able to exert so powerful an influence over the public mind.

But the popularity of film has been primarily due to the fact that producers have been content to *keep pace* with the incredibly slow march of civilization, *instead of leading the procession*. They have known how much safer it is to give the public 'what it expects,' rather than that of which it is in unconscious need.

Nothing Wrong—Or Right

Ironically enough, we can point to nothing wrong in the output of past years, if we judge the cinema by the same standards we apply to everything else, but neither can we point to anything *right*, constructive, progressive, during those years, when we begin to apply the infinitely higher standards demanded by the future. The screen might be likened to a hovering hawk, doing neither harm nor good, and keeping the public mentally suspended—until it swoops.

The crying need, of course, is for those who *know* what the future should be, and who shall make it their business to see that film helps to hasten its coming, defying the old-fashioned, out-of-date, yet *ever-safe parasitic kind of production which follows the crowd into the cinema instead of arriving first, occupying the screen in a brave and noble manner, and drawing the public by its sincerity, its strength, and its vision*.

Subject-matter apart for a moment, what of the future of the British feature film? Will America continue to dominate Britain's screens, and if so, does that matter? British producers have had a rough passage, but they have rocked the boat themselves. Their

films have never ceased to improve technically, and today, their best are more than equal to Hollywood's product. But that is not enough, for the British film industry continues to lack solidity, continuity, and a maximum output. Why?

Primarily because British producers have, in the past, thought in terms of American expenditure, and laboured under the misapprehension that the only way to make films is to copy the Hollywood system, and spend enormous sums of money. Apparently it was not realised that Hollywood regained most, if not all, of the cost of production from the vast American continent, plus, of course, revenue from the British market, and almost every other country in the world.

British films, on the other hand, can circulate only to a proportion of Britain's four to five thousand cinemas, plus the Dominions (which yield very little) and only very occasionally do they penetrate into America. Why, again? Because most British films are British only insofar as they have been made in this country. Otherwise, they have been but pale replicas of American films, which America is not very interested in releasing.

Economical British Films

Recently, more economical, and more typically British films have been made, some of which have been readily accepted by America because they express something new—something which Hollywood, with all its resources, could not possibly have produced. *There is a wealth of difference between the film made in Britain, and the British film, and the wealth lies in the latter, while ruin has greeted producers who have made extravagant films to the Hollywood pattern, designed to 'be acceptable to America.'*

That is quite an extraordinary mistake to make, for the sort of films most likely to appeal to America are those which bear no resemblance whatever to their own. However, this error is being discovered, and in due course, the typically British film, devised to exert an appeal to America and as many other nations as possible, will, let us hope, become representative of the industry here. Nevertheless, complete success, both from a filmic and a basic point of view, cannot be expected if there is no unity within the industry, and at present, there certainly is not.

What is most urgently needed is a policy—a definite plan to which all responsible producing concerns contribute, thereby creating a steady flow of original films made by steady people. A united front is the first essential, and agreement as to what constitutes a British film, and a law to prohibit the

squandering of money. At present, there are plenty of laws relating to film making here, but they tend to encourage extravagance, and certainly do not recognise the fact that a masterpiece can be made for five thousand, and a failure for one hundred thousand.

And though we are primarily film-makers, full of enthusiasm and knowledge of technique, let us remember that technique, like commercialism, is not enough—indeed, those qualifications can lead us astray if we do not possess vision, and a determination to shape the film of the future for the benefit of all, instead of the few. If the amateurs of today are to become the professionals of tomorrow, may a finer filmdom arise through their united efforts.

The same spirit which filled the drivers of the Covered Wagon years and years ago is waiting to be released in humanity to carry it into happier places. The same selflessness and desire for truth which surged through Louis Pasteur are to be found everywhere around us—waiting an opportunity to denounce widespread evil. There have been so many films which could not be bettered, but as there have been so many more which cannot be regarded as patterns for the future, we shall need to be firm about what we hope for.

Apart from the obvious results of technical progress, which will almost surely result in all-colour programmes, including news reels, the latter, perhaps, being televised from central stations to chains of cinemas, thereby

ceasing to be films at all—yes, apart from Wellsian dreams of mechanical miracles, we must hope for something else, for material progress uninfluenced by a finer judgment and a desire to aid human beings instead of forcing them to serve as cogs in wheels of destruction, would be valueless. We live in a world which is an example of the glorification of science and the forgetting of everything else.

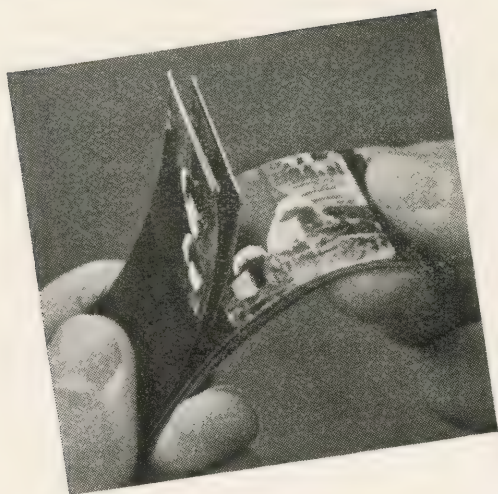
No Looking Back

Entertainment, in the best sense of that word, shall be the aim, but not the sole aim, of producers. Very well. There shall be no 'looking back' for material. We have had a habit of looking back too often, and seeing only the kind of past we wanted to see. We have rarely seen it all, or if we have, we have not thought it wise to present it in its entirety. I suggest therefore, that the theme of New Order features should be *looking forward*, and forgetting the past save as something to avoid repeating, though being careful to remember the debt owed by the world to past pioneers and all who have devoted themselves to the betterment of the human race.

Comedy, music, thrills, drama—everything which makes up life provides subject-matter, as it always has done, but it needs to be moulded—written with vision, and a preference given to stories which are universal in appeal—which strike the same chords in all peoples. Stories about humanity undivided will be welcome, for the only way to obtain a New Order of films is to bury the old one.

Here is a simple, but pleasantly composed shot, that would serve well as a continuity link. It shows plainly enough, without any need for a sub-title, that someone has gone away, and would lead naturally to a shot of that person. If, however, it is desired to suggest that he has gone a considerable distance, the next shot could usefully be a long shot of footsteps in the sand, followed by a close-up of them. From this the camera is tilted up to reveal the person himself in a different location.





Why Not Make A Flip Book?

You can then carry your favourite sequence about with you wherever you go and refresh your memory of it whenever you like. And if members of the family appear in it, it will appeal to them immensely.

By
ERIC F. IMPEY

IT is one of the misfortunes of the amateur cinematographer that he can only show his films under certain conditions, and that, unlike the still photographer, he cannot produce for inspection examples of his work at any opportune moment. But he *can* make a flip book from a favourite sequence. If the sequence is good enough to warrant this treatment a very fair representation of the shot will result—and in motion.

The book consists of a complete sequence of enlarged stills from a cine film, bound at one edge, while the other edge is flipped between the thumb and forefinger, so that the consecutive pictures appear before the eyes one by one in rapid succession and thus create the illusion of movement.

The actual making of the stills from your cine film was fully dealt with in an article in the May issue of A.C.W., but there are one or two small points that need to be noted here. Having regard to the large number of prints needed—about thirty is a minimum—it is not advisable to decide upon too large a print size at the outset, owing to the amount of material required (in these days of rationed output); I think that prints of a size, $1\frac{1}{4}$ " by 1" are adequate for most purposes, though this is a matter for personal choice.

Our first difficulty arises by reason of the small print size recommended, in that the intensity

of the illumination from the projector is likely to prove so great that it is impossible to control the time of exposure sufficiently closely to enable one to obtain a number of prints of equal tone density—and that is essential if the results are to be satisfactory. Fortunately the answer is quite simple and is illustrated in Fig. 1. It is to place a small piece of thin opal glass (about $\frac{1}{16}$ " thick) between the condenser and the gate. This has the effect of reducing the amount of light to reasonable enlarging limits, and it also reduces the heat reaching the film.

Some projectors have no still picture device; that illustrated (Kodascope "Home" Model) is one of them. In this case, to make enlargements, it is necessary to stop the mechanism by removing the driving belt from the motor and to fix the perforated light shutter out of the way, so that it does not impede the light at all. The hand turn knob should be given a twist so that the claw is disengaged and the rotary shutter is open. With the "Home" model it is possible to hold the perforated shutter out of the way by means of the kink at the join in the driving belt, as shown in the illustration, but in other cases

Fig. 2. Complete frame trimmed to size.



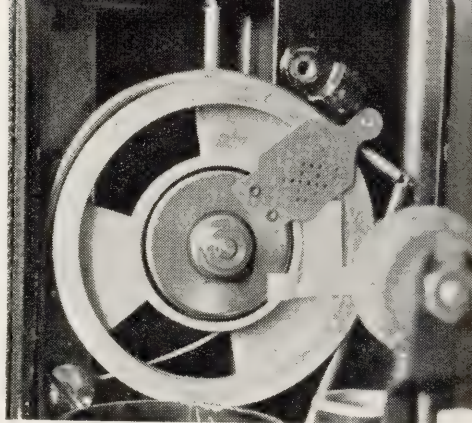
Fig. 1. Showing perforated light cut-off held up by kink in belt, and opal glass held against shutter opening with adhesive plaster.

it may be held out of the way with a length of fine wire.

The opal glass is cut to an appropriate size with a sixpenny glass cutter and is fixed in place on the rotary shutter with a tiny strip of adhesive tape. When this has been done all the parts of the machine can be re-assembled and you are ready to go to work. The motor should be permitted to run at a sufficient speed to cause an adequate draught round the lamp, and then all will be well. It is essential to remove the glass before projecting moving pictures again.

Machines vary a great deal in design, but once the general arrangement is understood, no difficulty is likely to be experienced in dealing with your own machine; in many instances, for example, the glass can be fitted on the outside of the lamphouse, and the fitting is far simpler by that fact alone (this remark applies to many of the Kodascope models). The sum result of the alteration is that an exposure of several seconds per frame will be necessary to produce a satisfactory final print, and it will be found to be quite easy to achieve equal density on every one of a batch of prints.

It is essential that all the final prints shall square up precisely, or the picture will "dance"; it is therefore advisable to project each frame with the merest fraction of the top frame line showing. By trimming



later to this frame line you will know that you have one edge dead accurate, and from that you will be able to gauge the others. It is also advisable to project the shot with the short sides of the frame absolutely parallel with the edges of the printing paper. This is easily arranged and will greatly facilitate trimming.

Trimming should be allowed for all round the print, and when each frame is completed and trimmed it should look something like Fig. 2, in which it will be noted that the margin at one side is about the same width as our $1\frac{1}{4}$ " frame, while at the opposite edge it is about $1/10$ ". So you will see that it is necessary to print well over to one side of the paper.

To produce the best effect, good black margins are desirable. If there appears to be any light scattered round the projected frame the side margins should be covered with opaque paper right up to the edges of the frame. Generally speaking, however, this trouble is not likely to be encountered, and the frames may be projected without masking.

Best Type of Printing Paper

It is not necessary to enlarge every consecutive frame; in practice it will be found to be quite satisfactory if every other frame or every third frame is enlarged, but in any event, whichever unit sequence you adopt, number every piece of paper (before processing) in pencil on the back, so that you will know the correct order of assembly at the finish. Finally, the best type of printing paper to use is a single-weight, glossy paper, as this surface gives a resilience to the finished booklet which is lacking in other paper surfaces.

Now we can assume that you have carried out all the enlarging necessary, and that you have your set of prints at your side. If you have glazed them they will be already flat, but otherwise you should draw each one

(Continued on page 69)

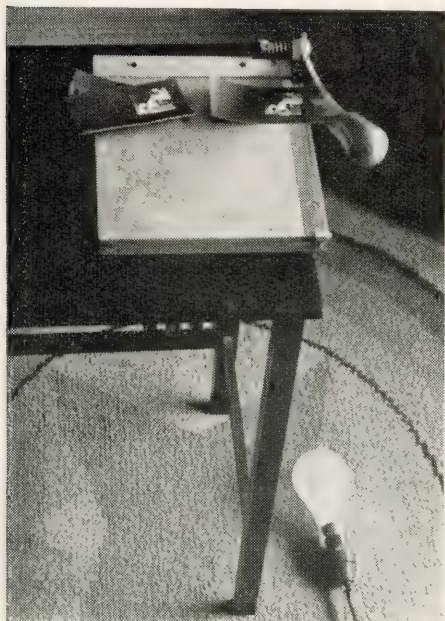
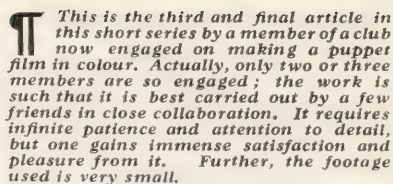


Fig. 3. Light arrangement for first trim.



ANIMATION for the AMATEUR:

Above all, it must be remarked, he must have the knack of remembering tiny details.

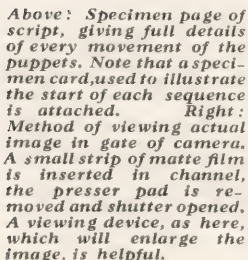
Animation is effected by three persons. The director's job will be discussed after we have considered the duties of the other two technicians, who are, of course, the actual animators. In addition to operating the puppets, one must keep accurate

records to solve continuity problems in such matters as lighting and camera or set positions, etc. The other animator must attend to the camera, although, as previously explained, the actual operation of this is executed from the director's console. It will be remembered that the camera is mounted upon a truck which runs the whole length of the animating table, in the surface of which a turntable is installed, so that, by the aid of these two movements, one may produce some very lavish effects.

For one sequence in our film, "Strange Tactics," a small proscenium arch was mounted before the camera, and behind this arch, a complete stage scene was built upon the turntable. At the start of the sequence

IN previous articles I have described the puppets and model set required for animation, together with the special studio equipment that should be installed should one wish to produce this class of amateur film. Now we must consider the director.

He must be prepared to tackle an animated film with great care and precision and to combat the utter boredom that one often experiences when undertaking this specialised branch of filming. Unfortunately, it is impossible to set out the thousand and one little difficulties that will occur throughout a production but it is imperative that he shall be an experienced technician who has the energy to overcome these minor setbacks and lead the way for the animators themselves.





The director, very carefully posed, at the console, with hand on main switch, about to change lights from dim to bright.

THE FINAL STAGE

By Denys Davis

Nicolette stands by the edge of this turntable as the curtains part to reveal a stage-door scene, masked by stage curtains, and framed by the proscenium arch. As the action at the stage door develops, the camera commences to track very slowly forward, actually half inch every tenth frame, until the arch disappears behind the camera. At this point in the sequence, the proscenium is removed to allow the camera to pass further forward towards the stage scene.

As the 'star,' Nicolette, passes through the stage-door, the turntable revolves to the left to reveal a theatre dressing-room with dresser in attendance. Nicolette enters this room and is rapidly made-up and dressed for her part. The camera, which has been steadily tracking forward, has, by now, passed from "the back of the stalls" to a C.U. of the dressing-room. As Nicolette stands up and twists around before the mirror, the turntable revolves again to the left to reveal the largest set in the whole film—a stage scene on which minor action is already taking place.

Scenes in a Revue

It is now obvious that the stage-door and dressing-room were scenes of the revue in which Nicolette is the 'star.' These small sets and the stage drapings were made as separate units so that they might be removed as they passed from view.

The large scene continues to revolve very slowly throughout the entire sequence as the lighting fades away, leaving one small spotlight at the very back of the stage for Nicolette's entrance. She enters and commences her number in the show during which, by careful planning, she is made to walk and dance towards the camera lens.

Thus these three movements gradually combine to produce a large C.U. of Nicolette's head, on which the sequence ends. Only detailed work in advance will produce such a length of film, but, while the shot may take several weeks to produce, the final effect, we think, is well worth while.

Let us now examine the sequence in greater detail, for it embraces most of the technicalities with which the animator is concerned. The camera started at the very back of the table and included part of the theatre itself; then it tracked forward, when the arch had passed out of sight and was then removed. This arch, of course, is built upon a smaller scale to create a false sense of size. This is a system used by "Ace Movies" in their studio and gives a great effect of spaciousness. At this stage, the supplementary lens is changed for one of shorter focal length.

Substituting New Lenses

The turntable is on the move again as the dressing-room comes round. Half way through this sequence the stage drapings pass from sight, so they, also, may be removed so that the lighting can reach the larger set behind. The very edge of this dressing room is painted to represent brickwork, and, as this passes before the lens, a longer focal length lens is substituted and, at the same time, the turntable slows down to quarter speed and remains thus for the rest of the sequence. From now until the fade out, everything is on the move, so great care must be taken to prevent errors from rendering the previous work useless. As we get nearer and nearer to Nicolette, the supplementary lens is changed several times.

As a matter of interest to those who may be commencing this work, in that one sequence, Nicolette walked 217 full steps

and danced 155. The camera position was moved 114 times, and the turntable passed through one and a quarter complete revolutions. In the finished film, the camera would appear to have travelled several hundred feet over the heads of the audience and right onto a "Hollywood" stage. In fact, it really is amazing what can be done on this miniature scale. It is certainly most fascinating to see one's wildest dreams gradually take shape. Remember, I said 'gradually'!

Parallax is another tricky problem that must be solved before filming may commence, for, as the camera is often as near as 12" to the subject, it will be seen that this matter must be carefully considered. Although there are several methods of correcting for

brilliant varnish upon the puppets responds well to the spots which are often used for back-lighting. The lighting must not be moved during a scene. A supply of partly-used Photofloods is kept to replace any bulbs that may burn out during a sequence. If brand new bulbs are substituted the sudden increase of light is noticeable.

With regard to the actual story and film presentation, there is little that can be said that would cater for all tastes. There is one point, however, that bears mention. In all the best films of this type I have seen, both amateur and professional, the story has been kept simple, for it is very hard to get a series of complicated situations over in this medium. The careful choice of music will greatly enhance any animated film, and

Animation in progress. The director, seated at the console in the foreground, overlooks the table, animators and studio equipment.



parallax, one must be able (in our view) to view the actual image in the gate itself.

The procedure is as follows. Remove the charger or cassette containing the film and then take out the gate. Place a strip of paper, or a few frames of opaque film, behind the gate in the film channel. Line up the scene, roughly within the limits of the view-finder, and then, if the lights are switched on to illuminate the set, the final effect may be seen, the outside limits marked and the finest composition secured.

When viewing the image in the gate, some form of magnifier will prove most helpful. It is then only necessary to replace the gate and the film, without moving the camera, and shoot the scene. While several frames of film are wasted every time this check up is made, we feel it is well worth while, for, should a mistake be made over this parallax question, many hours' work may have to be scrapped.

The lighting arrangements follow normal studio procedure, and, as usual, flat lighting is preferable for colour filming, while the

whole sequences may be evolved to fit recorded music, with charming results.

Lastly comes the filming proper. The set to be used has already been constructed and positioned upon the table, and accurate adjustment for parallax has been made. In the scene which is about to be shot, Nicolette is seated before the camera while the General, who has just stood up, is about to walk into the picture area and go across to her side. The script allows five steps within picture area for this action, so one of the animators plots out his route in a series of dots, each $1\frac{1}{4}$ " apart, in two lines for either foot.

This animator now places the General just outside the frame area, at the head of the series of dots. The other animator lights up the set and, at this stage, the camera motor is switched on to enable it to attain constant speed. The director, having passed the lighting and composition, reads out the whole action of the scene, in detail, so that the animators may have a clear picture of the entire scene in their minds before the

shot is commenced.

Reading from his script, the director gives instructions for a single movement of the General's left leg, which the animator performs and then moves away from the table so that the puppets shall not be accidentally rocked during the exposure. The director, having checked this movement off on his

shooting script, moves the lighting switch into the 'bright' position. He then presses the electric camera control button which makes one exposure. This is repeated many thousand times.

(Our contributor will be pleased to answer any enquiries from readers regarding animation. Write him c/o A.C.W.)

HOME THOUGHTS OF AN EVACUEE

Cine Causerie

BY "CINNAMON"

THE faces of old friends are welcome. Occasionally we have a visit from two friends, with a small daughter just over two years old. I recently gave her her first cine show, which she saw with wrapt attention and was particularly concerned about the fat old lady who falls over with Charlie Chaplin in "Skating." The next day there was a constant refrain: "Poor grandma broke." She worried to see "poor grandma broke" again. So I also showed it to her backwards. The next day she was found crawling round the table on all fours *backwards*, explaining that she was "like uncle's poor grandma broke."

But film shows have provided me with other amusing sidelights. In a church hall the chairman gave me an eulogistic welcome. He was, in fact, a bit of a cine fan himself. The first title and a sub-title, "Filmed by Cinnamon" went up on the screen. The chairman started a round of applause. Then the film broke! Did I hide my face in shame? I did not! After all, it must be very trying for a self-respecting film to be applauded before it has even been shown.

Curious Inaccuracies

Nevertheless, I like enthusiastic audiences. The show is easier to run and you feel it is worth doing. But that particular show had a quaint sequel. An account appeared in the local paper, with my name unrecognisable and an announcement that I had shown some "kine photographic slides." I have not written to the journal in question pointing out that I had shown films and that the word is usually spelt "cine"!

There have also been other curious inaccuracies in that local paper. If a film is in Kodachrome it is described as in "Technicolor" in the same way as the recent Airgraph postcards are described as "Photostats." In a similar way, a church caretaker assured me that the minister had two motion picture projectors "like yours." He saw two full shows so he knew what mine was like. On questioning I concluded that he must be

referring to small 35mm. machines. But enquiry proved quite conclusively that the instruments he referred to were magic lanterns.

* * *

When you have got the screen right and the projector right and the film threaded you are ready for someone to say "Go," and the show begins. Amateur films shows are often marred right at the beginning by the appearance of a long strip of out-of-focus film bearing a trade name. Possibly there is also a splash of clear film before the picture really begins. This is bad. You never see it at the professional cinema, where the projectionist keeps the lens covered until the right time.

Standardised Cue System

But the professional man has the great advantage of a standardised cue system on his film leader. If you saw the film from the start you would see the leader strip followed by a flash on the screen and the word "Start." After one foot of film had passed you would see the figure "11," then after another foot the figure "10," then "9," "8" and so on, these representing the number of feet yet to go before the picture starts.

Not only does this give a guide to the start of the picture but it also serves as a guide when starting up on later reels of the film. As reel 1 ends there appears momentarily in the picture on the screen a black dot surrounded by a white circle. This is the cue to start the other machine, with reel 2. By the time that the second cue mark, at the end of reel 1, appears on the screen, the second machine will have gained full speed and the picture be about to begin. The operator then uncovers the lens and, by the same operation, covers the lens of the first machine.

The change-over is seldom noticed, though it takes place every twelve minutes throughout the show. When I see the cue-mark on the screen I say, "There she goes," and my wife says, "Do be quiet."

Amateur film makers need a standardised cue marking of their own, particularly where films are exchanged. The use of "trade" leaders is economical and provides the protection from wear and tear which is particularly needed at the beginning (and end) of the film. If you wish to start the show on the picture proper then the hand can be removed from before the lens on the disappearance from the hand of the colour given by the out-of-focus lettering of the "trade" leader. But this is not always a satisfactory method, particularly if the title itself is coloured, or you are showing a film you have not seen before.

I have adopted the following practice.

New in America

IT is now some considerable time since we have been able to publish reviews of new apparatus, but at least one can whet the appetite by learning of new cine equipment recently introduced in America, since, in what one hopes may be a not distant future, it may be available here.

New on the market is the Cine Perflex Double 8 camera, which offers magazine-loading at a new low price level—\$59.50. It has an *f*/2.5 lens, five speeds, three-lens turret and calibrated masking device for telephotos.

The Cinemaster Duo 8mm. camera uses both double-eight and straight eight film. It includes a combined extinction exposure meter and optical viewfinder; there are three speeds. The de luxe model costs \$32.50, and there is another model at \$27.50.

Studio Type 16mm. Camera

Experiments in professional studio type 16mm. cameras are going ahead. Hollywood "Home Movies" reports that the first experimental Bell & Howell 16mm. professional camera is now undergoing tests. It follows standard 35mm. design rather than the conventional 16mm. Two interchangeable intermittent movements are provided—one for silent filming and the other, a silenced movement, for shooting with direct recorded sound.

The film magazines are carried on top of the camera. The four-lens turret is so designed that three and four inch lenses may be left in their mounts when the 15mm. wide-angle is used. Shots can be directly lined up through the lens with the aid of a focussing magnifier mounted on the side of the camera. The image is viewed on a focussing screen, erect and laterally correct. Controls, including the levers for the automatic shutter dissolve, are at the rear. It is stated that fades and lap dissolves can be

After the protective leader I splice on one foot of black film followed by three or four inches of white (not transparent) film. The picture then begins. The white film shows up well before it enters the gate and while it is in it. As soon as it is through the gate the lens is uncovered. I find this method very satisfactory. It is, moreover, economical since most film makers will have by them short lengths of both black and white raw film.

Although this is my own solution of the difficulty, one of my friends does not like it because of the two joins so close together. A standard method is desirable, but it must be simple. I have no doubt the Editor would welcome suggestions.

accomplished as easily as with 35mm. cameras.

There are two separate driving motors, both mounted at the top right hand side. One is a variable speed motor for silent shots, which runs in both forward and reverse, and operates on either 110 volts A.C. or from batteries. The other, also 110 volt, is synchronous for use while shooting direct recorded sound.

There is no news of commercial production of the camera. This apparently depends on the performance given by this strictly experimental model.

Lens Development

An outstanding development in lenses for professional cinematography has been announced; it consists in the application to both new and existing lenses of various forms of non-glare coating. "The chief advantages of this treatment," says "The American Cinematographer," "are an almost complete elimination of internal flare when shooting into strong light sources, a notable increase in apparent definition and contrast, and an increase in effective speed of between 1 and 1½ stops."

It was used in the shooting of "Citizen Kane" and helped to produce new records in depth of focus and smaller lens apertures on extremely long sets. With Super XX and coated lenses, stops from *f*/8 to *f*/16 were used—a remarkable innovation when it is realised that, in normal studio practice, *f*/3.5 is regarded as a very small stop indeed.

The most notable development in lighting is the increased use of 150-watt "dinky" spotlights evolved through the lower illumination requirements of modern high-speed film. In addition to their professional use they "make spotlights for the first time available to the amateur at prices within reach of the amateur's purse."

FAMOUS LIBRARY FILMS : No. 8

George John, Helga Thomas and Paul Hartmann in a striking composition, at the arrival of Cinderella in her silver coach.



"Cinderella"

By

H. A. V. Bulleid, M.A.

CINDERELLA is a magnificent and unique specimen from the artistic triumphs of the middle period of the German cinema; magnificent in its charming and beautiful realisation of this famous story against a background of delightful studio architecture and superb trick camera-work; and unique in the very fact that this technical proficiency was lavished upon charm, in contrast to the usual gloomy and morbid psychological introspections.

Ludwig Berger achieved fame with *Cinderella*, to which he added in 1926 with *The Waltz Dream* (UFA, with Mady Christians, Willy Fritsch). Then proceeding to Hollywood he did *The Sins of the Fathers* (1929, with Emil Jannings) and *The Vagabond King* (1930, in colour, with Jeanette MacDonald and Dennis King). Recently he shared with Tim Whelan and Michael Powell the direction of *The Thief of Baghdad*. It is clear that *Cinderella* was inspired: there are signs of detailed care having been lavished on its realization, to the extent, for example, of a scheme of patterned photographic compositions having been worked out for the long shots, so that the action was composed around a central feature set

symmetrically in the frame. This occurs frequently, e.g., the ballroom, the palace staircase, the king's bath, the various exteriors of buildings, etc., and proves a detailed pre-shooting linkage between director, cameraman, and designer.

It is also of interest to note how the photographic compositions drift into the commonplace in the exterior scenes in the country: cameraman Gunthur Krampf was essentially of the studio, and rather at sea when he was unable to control the exact application of light. He also photographed *The Student of Prague* (1925, by Henrik Galeen, with Werner Krauss, Conrad Veidt). The designer, Bamberger, was also on *The Waltz Dream*. No scenarist is traceable: it is probable that Ludwig Berger did both adaptation and scenario himself. The sustained atmosphere of charm points to this.

"Most Beautiful Fantasy"

Paul Rotha in "The Film Till Now" very aptly remarks:

Cinderella was a film of the most beautiful fantasy, delicately conceived and realised with a perfection of decorative pictorialism. The touch of Ludwig Berger seemed magical, so completely entrancing was the subtle fabrication of this exquisite work. Bamberger, for his design, centred his theme around the charm of southern Baroque art, making full use of the plastic moulding in which the German studio workers seem to excel. Technically, the magic in this film was brilliantly accomplished, for it was essentially cinematic.

The version available is just one fifth of the original, whole episodes having been ruthlessly cut out, including the famous battle of the witches; however, one fifth is better than no film, and it even adds to the praise due to this charming work that its



Olga Tschechowa, Mady Christians and Lucie Hofflich on the stairs.

logic and charm persist in the remnant. The excessive cutting has, however, inevitably caused jerkiness and hectic speed of action-narration, so that to consider the synopsis is valueless; and accordingly a direct examination of the available version follows...

The fairy godmother is introduced in a pleasantly untidy room with a window in the background through which sunlight streams. She is weaving the golden threads of her god-daughter's future; but Cinderella can see nothing till she looks through the magic spectacles, when the arc of woven threads appears—a charming effect, done by simple super-imposition. Then, looking into the magic mirror, a glimpse of the future is foreseen; in medium close-up the



Frieda Richard and Helga Thomas, after the appearance of the golden threads of the future. Note the balanced composition and Baroque window with sunlight in the background.

stepmother adjusts her commanding face in a glass, while her two daughters wrangle over their packing. These two young ladies (by no means ugly; as one had, of course, hoped) later achieved considerable fame in many films: Mady Christians particularly in *The Waltz Dream* which "got" America, and Olga Tschschowa particularly in Rene Clair's *The Italian Straw Hat* (1929).

The arrival of their carriage is shown in two long shots in charming exteriors, specially built in the studio grounds. Footmen assist the new mistress, who sweeps into the house, ignoring Cinderella. Her father, sympathetic but already hen-pecked, is piled high with baggage by the cheerful "ugly" sisters. The three enter the hall and proceed up the stairs: the balusters of the staircase are a fine piece of period moulding in themselves.

The stepmother turns out the three old men to whom Cinderella was giving a meal in the kitchen, and flounces back through

the hall to the stairs, in an exquisitely lit long shot: the carriage can still be seen through the open door, soft daylight streams in, and a balanced composition is obtained by a fairly strong light on the stairs at the left side of the frame. The arches and mouldings and fanlight over the door in the Baroque style are charmingly in evidence. The sequence fades out on Cinderella unhappily sitting down by the kitchen hearth.

An introductory title for King Kindheart is followed by a shot of his majesty, in the colossal royal bathchamber, shaking water out of his eyes. Attendants solicitously dry him. Scribes note his words as he decides to hold a ball, to get the prince married. The prince is then introduced in a mid shot, playing a 'cello; the introductory title (*Prince Charming was lonely and sad*) has been super-imposed, an inartistic and revolting trick which has nothing whatever to recommend it, although it is, regrettably, still practised by people who either think so little of their picture that they allow writing to be scrawled across it, or so little of the title importance that they permit its casual addition to any convenient dark area of the picture.

In this case, as the wording vanishes, ludicrously and as though by clockwork, the Prince stops playing and begins to look lonely: the super-imposed title has the additional vice of stamping unreality all over the frame, and effectively annuls the polished acting of Paul Hartmann: this player was also in the contemporary *Chronicle of the Grieshuus*, made at the same studio, famous chiefly for its beautiful photography by Fritz Arno Wagner, and available on 9.5mm.

The proclamation of the ball is read by a crier and attendants, and heard enthusiastically by the stepmother from a balcony (another finely detailed set) and by Cinderella in the doorway below: but she cowers as she realizes who is above—a neat directorial touch. She proceeds into the hall to the stairs, and in the distance, through the open door, we see the crier and attendants proceeding away, superb continuity of back-ground action over a cut, and hardly ever seen nowadays due to the expense involved. Similarly, upstairs, when Cinderella asks if she may go to the ball, the courtyard can be seen through the window.

Long shot (oval mask): The ballroom. Note the charmingly grouped players and symmetrical composition. (It might perhaps be mentioned here that readers sometimes ask us if we can supply studio photographs of illustrations reproduced with the "Famous Library Films" series, but we regret we are unable to do so.)



The stepmother laughingly pours the beans into the cinders; and Cinderella starts to sort them out, sitting on the steps in the yard; and, charmingly pigeons help her, so she finishes before the others start; but they laugh at her and drive off, the exteriors by night being most beautifully lit.

Shown in simple but effective superimposition, the ghosts of the three old men tell Cinderella to go and pray at her mother's grave: and doing so, she sees the shadowy figure of the Prince, who kneels opposite to her then fades away: and in a lively mid-shot the fairy godmother leans from a tower window and invokes a great wind, and leaves fall and blow around Cinderella and miraculously her clothes change into a beautiful, shimmering dress of silver. The silver coach drives up and, warned to leave before midnight, Cinderella is driven away.

The ballroom is a superb, accurate, and very beautiful set with magnificent chandeliers. The grouping of the players is unobtrusively excellent, and their movements graceful. In strange contrast to the Americans, the

players wear their costumes as though they belong to them. Good comedy asides are provided by a shot of court gossip and the fact that the fairy godmother plays the piano. In another fine night exterior the coach drives up, the Prince sees it coming and dashes down the stairs, and reaches the door as it comes to rest. A lovely mid shot follows, of Cinderella alighting as the old coach man stands by: George John, remembered in *Siegfried*, *Vaudeville*, and *Metropolis*, makes something even of this infinitesimal part.

The Prince gives Cinderella the flower for the most beautiful lady, and leads her into the ballroom; and no comment whatever is made by anyone present—because it has all been ruthlessly cut out in the process of condensing the available version, this being perhaps the most glaring example of how narrative logic is wrecked.

Charming Comedy

Supper time is shown with charming comedy by a long shot of food being borne swiftly up the picturesque palace stairs by a vast staff: and Cinderella and the Prince are left alone in the ballroom till she suddenly notices that it is five to twelve (C.S. of the clock, and, frantically redundant, a superimposed explanatory title!) She hurries out but is delayed by the Prince: then runs on again, and the fairy godmother baulks the Prince—with a touch of broad comedy: then...

L.S. (camera in hall facing stairs: low position for dramatic emphasis, and stairs appear symmetrically). Cinderella anxiously runs up, then stops...

L.S. (camera in hall looking towards door). The silver coach stands outside; but suddenly it vanishes in a cloud of smoke which drifts



The Prince (Paul Hartmann) stops Cinderella (Helga Thomas) on the palace stairs, and hands her the symbolic flower.

Production	.. Decla-Bioskop (later UFA)
	Berlin, 1923.
Trade Review	.. January 6th, 1927
English Release	December 12th, 1927.
	Distributed by Wardour.
Length	.. 7,800 feet.
Directed by	.. Ludwig Berger.
Photography	.. Gunthor Krampf.
Design	.. Rudolph Bamberger.
	CAST:
Cinderella	.. Helga Thomas.
Prince Charming	.. Paul Hartmann.
Fairy Godmother	.. Frieda Richard.
Baron Neverich	.. Herman Thimig
Step-mother	.. Lucie Höflich.
Ugly Sisters	.. { Olga Tschechowa.
	.. { Mady Christians.
Coachman	.. George John.
Sub-standard Availability:	.. Pathescope
	Library, 2 SB reels of 9.5mm., equivalent
	to 1,500 ft. of 35mm.

away to reveal a huge clock indicating midnight.

M.S. Cinderella stands petrified : and her silver dress fades back to her own humble clothes. She looks round apprehensively . . .

L.S. The Prince comes dashing down the stairs . . .

L.S. Cinderella melts into a shadowed corner, and the Prince passes by to the door, not seeing her. (Strong light through the doorway emphasises the shadow, besides making a dramatic pictorial composition).

Then Cinderella runs off, losing her slipper, and the Prince gives chase but is thwarted by the fairy godmother who causes a bridge to separate, then flings an invisible mantle over Cinderella (a reverse-motion trick double-exposure). The sequence fades out on a close-up of the Prince fondling the flower (spoiled by a jerk of his head in the middle, where a foot or so has been scooped out in the condensing ritual.)

Simple Trick Shot

The Prince love-sickly fondles the slipper, and it is decided, in a delightful mid-shot of the anxious court personnel, that the slipper should be removed, to cure him. The luckless recipient of this job stealthily approaches, watched by the fairy godmother in her magic glass : and when he touches the slipper there is a flash and, struck down, he quickly fades out, leaving a patch on the carpet from which the Prince, startled, recovers the slipper : and the wretched man, dwarfed, is safely imprisoned in a glass jar !

The scale effect is used here, and backed up in a close-up showing the man beating against the glass. It should be noted that the trick construction in the mid shot is simple : one exposure would straightforwardly show the godmother and the empty jar : the second exposure, made only on that portion of the frame representing part of the interior of the jar, would be a

long distant shot of the man such that his full-length figure fitted easily into that portion.

In a sequence confused by excessive condensation, Cinderella is sent to the palace with fruit, disguised as a gipsy : but becomes confused, and runs away, losing another slipper. She cries, and the tears miraculously restore her pale skin and blonde hair just as the Prince comes up, sees her feet, and tries to fit the slippers—but she runs off again. Meantime, with an explosion and a slow mix, the fairy godmother has built a small model palace for them : Cinderella runs in, but the doors shut in the Prince's face : he throws down the slipper (one got lost, apparently in continuity) and it immediately changes into a crown. Then, again in characteristic symmetrical mid-shot, Cinderella appears, clad once again in the silver dress : and kneels to receive the crown : and from the upper windows gape down the courtiers, until . . .

Skilful Direction

M.S. from the roof the fairy godmother drops some handkerchiefs . . .

L.S. . . . which magically fasten over their eyes.

M.S. The Prince and Cinderella break their embrace to look up at this queer commotion.

L.S. Then the fairy godmother makes the shutters close, for double assurance, and . . .

M.S. . . . draws her gauze shawl around herself and fades away.

M.S. The Prince and Cinderella enter their palace . . . SLOW FADE OUT.

THE END.

It says a lot for the power of the cinema image that, in cutting down a not-overlong original to one fifth, narrative and characterisations and backgrounds manage to subsist : one cannot, for example, imagine a lucid one-act version of "Hamlet." Even in these two reels one gets to know the Prince, and Cinderella, and the king, and all the rest down to the queer coachman : and one remembers the ballroom, and the lovely grace of the *Baroque* buildings, and the silver coach ; and the clock at midnight, and the blindfolded courtiers, and the symbolic happy-ever-after. And this success is due in part to the skill given to each phase of production, but in the main to Ludwig Berger whose direction resulted in so unified and charming a film.

NEXT MONTH

No. 9 of this series, to be published next month, is a commentary on "The Italian Straw Hat."

DO IT YOURSELF!

practical ideas for the handyman

Trouble-Free 9.5mm. Chargers

Each month our contributor supplies worthwhile practical ideas: things to make and things to do. Suggestions for gadgets are welcomed.

By G. A. GAULD, B.Sc.

WITH the exception of one or two cameras in the luxury class, the 9.5mm. worker finds himself restricted to charger loading. The system has its advantages for straightforward filming: simple loading, a very short leader, and the possibility of changing over from one emulsion to another in the middle of a reel with a wastage of only a few inches of film. At the same time, careful design of camera and charger is necessary, together with regular cleaning of the gate and film passages, if trouble-free working is to be ensured.

There are now many makes on the market, all developed from the design pioneered by Pathe, who originated this size of film. One



Fig. 1.

make may claim smoother film tracking, another the advantage of a charger made in separate pieces, and so forth. Nevertheless, the working principle is the same in every case. The charger consists essentially of a top and bottom light-proof compartment, the lower one having a take-up drum, actuated by the camera mechanism, on which the exposed film is wound after its passage through the gate and intermittent claw. No sprockets are used and the smooth running of the film is largely dependent on having the pressure plate in the gate adjusted to exactly the right degree.

Loading the camera is a very simple operation. In some makes, the gate opens automatically; in others, perhaps a knob has to be turned. In either case, once the gate is opened, the charger is dropped into the camera, and the loop of film between the top and bottom compartments is slipped into the gate. The gate is closed and the claws

given a turn or two, to make sure that they are engaging correctly. As soon as the door is shut, the camera is ready for action. To simplify matters still further, the charger is usually sold ready loaded and done up in a neat package all ready for return to the manufacturers, as the price will include the cost of processing the film.

Now the amateur who likes to take a little more trouble over his work and the other fellow who is a trifle hard up for ready cash, will find two objections to this scheme. First, film which has been tightly rolled and left on the dealer's shelves for weeks or even months, before it is sold, has a tendency, particularly if the weather is warm, to stick together. The unrolling action of the film is retarded.

The Cause of the Trouble

After many struggles with gate and take-up tension springs and after many frantic letters to and from the camera manufacturers, I am firmly convinced that this is the whole cause of the trouble when the film jams in a camera that is otherwise in good order.

Secondly, there is the matter of postage. The majority of us, no doubt, buy and dispatch our films through a local dealer, but there must be many who are entirely dependent on mail orders. Here, the difference in postage between film in tins and film in chargers is appreciable, and if one is to make use of the lower-priced film stock and processing services advertised in these pages, it becomes a very important factor in the price of the final reel of film, ready for projection.

A considerable saving is possible by purchasing three 30ft. reels of stock at one time (if you can get them!) in the standard aluminium container and returning them for processing in the same package. The three will go for the same postage as a single charger. Admittedly, it is only a matter of pence but it mounts up by the time all those shots have been pieced up to make a four hundred foot reel.

So there are at least two good reasons for loading one's own chargers, quite apart from the fact that these same chargers in the owner's sole care will be kept spotlessly clean and in perfect condition. This inevitably has a beneficial effect on the finished film.

"Under the bedclothes" is quite a good substitute for a dark room when none is available. In either case, the loading is carried out by sense of touch alone, so that it is as well first to practise a routine with some exposed or scrap film in daylight. When this has become automatic and the sense of touch alone is all that is required, then the job of loading the charger with "live" film may be tackled without the risk of anything going wrong.

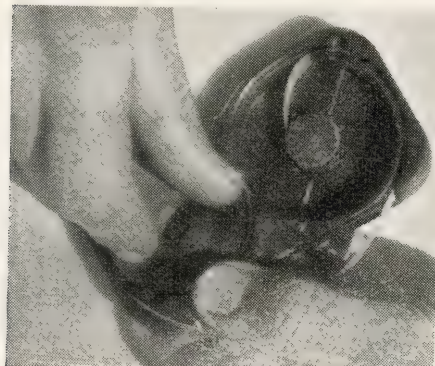


Fig. 2.

The tin of film, three empty chargers and a spare take-up drum are the items required, if three chargers are to be loaded at the same time. First, extract one film from the tin and replace the lid in case it is forgotten later. Open one of the chargers and place the cover handy to one side. Unwrap the film and take hold of the reel between the second finger and thumb of the right hand, the forefinger being used to retain the loose end in place and prevent it unwinding. It is next dropped into the top compartment of the charger with an inch or two of the loose end sticking up.

Now take hold of the charger with the right hand, as shown in Fig. 1, the thumb being used to hold the reel of film in place. The loose end is gripped by the thumb and second finger of the left hand, the forefinger being used to guide the film into the top channel, as shown. Pull out a few inches of film and then replace the cover. The charger may then be taken out into daylight and the spare drum fixed to the end.

This is an important operation as the end must be securely attached and fixed square to the drum. The Pathe drum is flanged

at each side and the film is cut on each side for a few inches to suit. This ensures that the end will be correctly fixed once the spring clip is attached to hold it in place. The reader will realise that by using a spare drum, this important job is carried out in daylight and therefore mistakes should be almost impossible.

When you have drawn out about six inches of film, the charger must be returned to the darkroom or loading box. The cover is removed, together with the original drum. It is then a simple matter to insert the drum with the film attached and guide the film into place along the lower light-trap channel. You will note that with the Pathe charger and certain other makes, the take-up drum must be in position, otherwise light will enter and fog the film through the opening to the top compartment. Where the two compartments are separated, the same method may be used but a spare drum is not required.

Easing the Top Reel

Before replacing the cover, the top reel of film must be cleared of any suspicion of stickiness. The method applies equally well in the case of a film supplied in a charger. The charger is held in the left hand, as shown in Fig. 2, the thumb again being used to hold the reel of film in place. By pressing lightly with the forefinger and thumb of the right hand, as shown, rotate the reel in an anti-clockwise direction.

It will probably crackle as spots of sticky emulsion come apart, and if the operation is continued, a point will be reached when the reel will suddenly unwind of its own accord, as the close wound coils near the centre spring open. The film will then no longer be a reel of tightly wound coils. They will be slack and absolutely free, any possibility of drag on the claws due to stickiness being entirely eliminated.

Since I discovered this tip several years ago, I can honestly say I have had no further trouble with jammed film, using a camera which was, and still is, prone to this fault.

To unload the charger, remove the cover and turn the charger over, shaking it at the same time, so that the reel of exposed film drops out into your hand held in readiness underneath. The reel is then gripped in the left hand between second finger and thumb, the forefinger again being used to hold the loose end in place, while the core is pushed out with the right hand. In the case of the Pathe charger, the clip can be slipped off with the nail of the forefinger. The end is then tucked in and the reel wrapped up in the original lightproof paper and returned to the tin. Do not forget to replace the lid on the tin before it is exposed to light.

READERS' FILMS REVIEWED

IT COULD HAPPEN TO YOU. 200 ft. 16mm. By Bernard A. Storey.

Here is a short film that is well put together—and was worth doing. True, it is a trifle unbalanced, but that can for the most part be remedied by cutting. The opening is a little tedious, the film taking too long to get to the point.

At the beginning we follow the progress of a feckless, timorous young man from his home to the countryside, whither he has set out on a walk. There is too much of that walk; no useful purpose is achieved by showing it in detail. A film of this length must open snappily and get down to cases at once. There is no need to show him leaving his house, shutting the door, walking down the garden path, opening the gate and so on. To concentrate on these pedestrian details, indeed, gives the impression that the walk is of importance and is to lead to a pre-arranged encounter of some kind. Actually, the point of the film is that the encounter is definitely a chance one . . . It could happen to you.

Nice Observation

There is, however, some nice observation in this sequence, illustrating the young man's character. For instance, he punctiliously raises his hat to a lady who is not seen. He just smiles at a point outside the frame. Omitting the lady helps to convey a suggestion of politeness in the abstract, thus assisting the presentation of his character. But it is unfortunate that the next shot is one of a tramp, so that one gets the impression that it is he who is being saluted. These shots should be separated by one or two continuity shots.

The tramp threatens the young man, who is thoroughly scared, allows his wallet to be taken and beats an ignominious retreat. Now had he learnt to defend himself, even though he lacked physical strength, the whole affair would have been otherwise. So now we come to the meat of the film: a demonstration, carefully filmed, of a ju-jitsu.

Repetition Advisable

We found that we were unable to remember some of the throws, even though they particularly struck our fancy at the time and we watched the movements carefully.

We feel it would be an advantage to repeat some of the throws from a slightly different angle, the change in viewpoint serving two purposes: to prevent the repetition from being too obvious, and to assist the student who, in actual practice,

Readers are invited to send us their films for unbiased criticism. Reports are sent by post and a Leader awarded for those films which reach a reasonable standard of merit. Please do not send your film without first asking for a date to be reserved for its screening.

would probably not find himself in precisely the same positions as those illustrated.

One realises, of course, that the film can be rewound and a shot projected again and again, but one does not always care to do this and it is not altogether desirable to do so in this case, since the instruction is sugared with 'theatrical' treatment, the film being presented as a playlet.

The conclusion of the film is a repetition—up to a point—of the beginning. The young man sets out on the same walk and meets with the same tramp, but this time, armed with his knowledge of self-defence, he speedily beats him up and puts him to flight. The tramp rolls down a slope, but it is obvious that he is rolling himself, so most of this shot should be cut.

The titles are bold and effective. Ortho stock was used and was home-processed—very successfully. A Leader has been awarded.

A DAY A-WHEEL. 276 ft. 9.5mm. By A. L. A'Hern.

Despite the main title, this does not appear to be a film about a cycling tour. We see very little of the man who is supposed to have made the trip and manifestly he was not at the places shown. We appreciate that his part in the film was intended to supply continuity, but it does not in effect do this. It separates rather than joins the sequences.

For instance, we may see him consulting a map, then mounting his cycle and riding off. Next follows a series of shots of some beauty spot, the assumption being that this is the place to which he has gone. But although we see other people, including cyclists, Bill is never among them, so that one quickly comes to regard the continuity shots of him as something to be got over as soon as possible in order that we may see further pleasant views. If it is not possible to take some additional shots of the same scenes, but with him in them, it would be better to have him out altogether and change the main title.

At the beginning of the film there is a sub-title: "Bill, rising early, takes to the road." This is commendably brief, but

even so there is too much information in it. It is sufficient to tell us that he rises early—and that could be done by a shot of a clock, without the aid of a sub-title. It is not good practice to tell the audience about something that is to happen some time later. In this case we see Bill breakfasting before he takes to the road.

Generally speaking (but there are, of course, exceptions to the rule) a sub-title should give information about the shots immediately following it. To take an extreme case, one of the many objections to a sub-title such as: "At 8.15 James started out for Xtown, passing Ytown on the way and arriving at his destination at dusk" is that the audience could not be expected to carry all this information in its head and fit it into its proper places in the film.

There is, however, another reason why the sub-title in "A Day A-Wheel" is not very happy. The audience can quite well see for itself that Bill later takes to the road, so there is little point in drawing attention to the fact. The only information in the sub-title that could not easily be given pictorially is that the young man's name is Bill. And this could be conveyed indirectly, in light-hearted fashion by an S.T.: "They do say that Bill was born with wheels instead of legs," which tells us not only who he is but also that he is an ardent cyclist.

Trimming Needed

The first shot, and a close-up of tea being poured out, are far too long. They need to be drastically trimmed, but really it is preferable to cut the introduction out altogether.

There are two instances in which the shot is held on after he leaves the picture. They should be cut immediately he leaves or is about to leave it, otherwise the audience expects that something else is to happen in the same scene.

The author was much taken up with an agricultural machine and took shots of it from many angles, including a worm's eye view. The shots are all very good, but their very number gives it an importance which it does not possess in relation to the film. Two or three are enough—one, say, in which it is featured and two in which it is subordinate.

The film contains some very fine shots, beautifully composed, but, in the main, they are too static. It is conscientious and painstaking, but it rather lacks fluency, for it is composed principally of views, presented with no comment and lacking in human interest. At the same time, a pleasant picture results. It was shot on ortho with a Coronet and Dekko camera, 54 ft. being removed in the editing.

PROFESSIONAL FILMS

At Your

† Our contributor discusses in detail two delightful comedies shortly to be released and gives, in addition, potted reviews of other interesting productions.

I HAVE several times alluded to the difficulty these days of trying to deal with films actually released during the month of publication of A.C.W. During August, for example, you may see at your local cinema a film called *I Wanted Wings*. It is described as "Paramount's mighty saga of the air." It runs to a prodigious length and seems as though it might be very interesting; but I don't know. At the time of writing the film has not yet been shown.

With the Editor's consent, therefore, I propose to adopt a new procedure in these articles by referring to films which I have seen during the past month, and which I know are going to be released in the near future. As far as possible I shall include films to be released in the current month, but I shall not attempt to restrict myself to them, as hitherto.

Last month's trade shows, I happily recall, included two quite delightful comedies: *The Devil and Miss Jones* (R.K.O. Radio), directed by Sam Wood, with Charles Coburn, Jean Arthur and Robert Cummings; and *The Lady Eve* (Paramount), directed by Preston Sturges, with Barbara Stanwyck and Henry Fonda and (by a coincidence) Charles Coburn again, but in a supporting part.

Girl Meets Boy

There is nothing essentially original in the plot of either of them. *The Lady Eve* concerns a cardsharp and his attractive daughter, and their meeting with a well-to-do young explorer who is far more at home in the jungles of the Amazon than in the drawing rooms of high society. The girl makes up her mind to capture the young man, falls in love with him, and decides to go straight, but unfortunately he learns of her record and the inevitable complications arise.

The Devil and Miss Jones is the comedy of the millionaire who decides to mingle under a pseudonym with his employees. As is so often the case with good and entertaining films, however, the plot is of little importance compared with the treatment. The treatment in each of these two films is both clever and refreshing.

The suffragette arrives in Wyoming, contributing a novel chapter to the sagas of the West—a scene from "The Lady from Cheyenne," featuring Loretta Young.

Cinema This Month

By

**ERNEST
LINDGREN**

(Curator, National
Film Library)



It has been common now, for some little time, for directors to make their titles an integral part of the film rather than a mass of wording to be got out of the way before the film actually starts. There was the introduction to *Our Town*, for example, where the background to the titles consisted of a shot of the narrator coming slowly forward towards the audience.

The key of *The Lady Eve* is set at the very beginning by some facetious animated cartoon word round the credit titles in the Walt Disney style. A serpent in a top hat, with a face which suggests something between Donald Duck and Harpo Marx, writhes with a malevolent twinkle of mischief throughout the credits, which end with an apple falling from his head. This is the first occasion on which I have heard an audience burst out laughing at the credit titles before the film has begun at all.

Light-Hearted Treatment

The rest of the film is in keeping with the opening and it is of interest to notice just how important is the director's contribution to this light-heartedness all the way through. All sorts of ingenious touches come to my mind. When Barbara Stanwyck, the girl, first sees the callow young explorer (Henry Fonda), it is in the dining room of a liner where he is buried in a book in an attempt to avoid the glances and attentions of all the young women who regard him as a most desirable young eligible.

She sees him, however, not directly but reflected in the mirror of her handbag to which she addresses her thoughts in monologue. She turns the mirror, too, on the various young women who are trying to engage his attention. The camera shows

what she sees in the mirror in each case, while we hear her low voice with its dry wit ridiculing the poor technique of each attempt.

The mirror turns to Henry Fonda again. He rises from his table, taking his book to seek obscurity elsewhere, and walks towards Barbara's table, where she is still absorbed in her mirror, when there is a sudden crash. Henry has fallen full length over her outstretched leg. *This Eve* knows how to throw her apple.

In this film Henry Fonda is always falling down when he comes within range of Barbara's seductive charms. In the last half of the film in one delightful drawing room scene he has three falls one after the other, and it is due entirely to the skill of the direction that in every case they come entirely unexpectedly. Half the trick lies in the ingenuity with which each spill is made to differ from the others.

In the first instance, while walking across the room he turns his head aside to look out of a window and falls full-length over a sofa. In the second instance (not actually a fall, but the results are much the same) a tough henchman appointed to look after him has usurped a waiter's place in order to convey some information to Henry while he is at dinner, but becomes engaged in an altercation with the head waiter while standing at Henry's elbow; in the tussle the contents of the serving dish are spilt over him.

The Surprise Element

On the third occasion Henry bends down to release Barbara's dress which is caught under a chair leg. He is the essence of politeness and consideration; the possibility of danger near at hand is unthinkable. His task of gallantry completed, he swiftly



Henry Fonda has another spill. In his new film, "*The Lady Eve*," a first-rate comedy, he is always falling down when he comes near the heroine, his mishaps being excellent examples of directorial skill.

out at a wayside halt in his pyjamas; into, need it be added, a large sized puddle.

The Lady Eve is packed with individual touches of this gay kind. *The Devil and Miss Jones* is an even funnier film and more successful comedy because it has equal wit but a much more developed sense of unity. Its humour does not consist in "individual" touches; it is an integral part of the film as a whole. That makes it more difficult to pick out fragments by way of illustration.

I think that one reason why it is a better comedy is that it has more contact with the realities of life as ordinary people know it, whereas *The Lady Eve* is pure farce. The Devil is a certain Mr. Merrick (Charles Coburn), who is outraged by the fact that the employees in a large stores (to him some petty little affair among his many vast holdings), dissatisfied with their conditions of work, have hung him in effigy outside the store.

When a detective, engaged to investigate the matter, proves too dilatory, Mr. Merrick decides to investigate the position himself and joins the firm *incognito* as one of its more humble employees. The experience humanises him and gives him sympathy with their point of view and when, at the end, a conference is arranged between representatives of the workers and the directors, he sits on the same side of the table as the workers.

The Labour Problem

The film makes no attempt, of course, to deal in any sense with the labour problem upon which it touches, but the fact that it includes this problem at all, as part of its subject matter, gives it a sense of relevance to life as we know it, which is not unimportant. If it fails to discuss the labour problem, at least it does not ignore it. The things upon which the humorous situations are built, too, are common everyday things such as the petty persecution by department managers, employees eating their sandwich lunches in the park, the crowded beaches of the popular waterside resort littered by people in bathing costumes almost more densely packed than the grains of sand beneath them, and so on.

Time and time again one discovers the fundamental importance of realism in the cinema. Even light comedy is no exception. Is the wit of a Lubitsch or a Rene Clair more a matter of technique than of an acute observation of life? And there is a corollary, too; namely, that even the purest kind of documentary, because it is dealing with real things, need not lack humour.

rises—to bang his head underneath a fully loaded tray which a waiter is just bringing in through the open doorway. Here, too, as in the first and second cases, the surprise is greatly intensified by the fact that the cause of the disaster is not brought into the shot until the actual moment the spill occurs. The camera rises with the actor and the tray comes into view as he hits it.

Another ingenious touch in this film occurs near the end. *The Lady Eve* (Barbara) has married her explorer for the purpose of revenging herself on him for having thrown her over earlier. Her revenge begins in the sleeping compartment of the train which is carrying them away on their honeymoon. She begins a series of fictional confessions of previous *affaires* concerning which she allows meticulous details to be drawn out of her.

Dialogue and Sound Effect

The scene gradually works up into a climax by an interpolation of dialogue with train noise. For example: "And then there was George . . ." "George? George who?" asks the husband, running his hand through his hair. The train tears into a tunnel and its din blots out every other sound. When they are out of the tunnel again Eve is saying: "And then there was Gaston," and so on. The speed of cutting from train to compartment and back again increases as Fonda, who has begun as the magnanimous forgiver, gets more and more desperate. At last he grabs up his luggage and steps

This question of the importance of reality in comedy cropped up again in another film I saw a few days ago called *Pimpernel Smith* (British National) produced by, directed by, and starring Leslie Howard, who is supported by Francis Sullivan, Mary Morris and Hugh McDermot. It is the story of a young English professor of archaeology and his adventures in rescuing persecuted men of talent from Nazi Germany. This is a large-scale production and on the whole has been very effectively done.

But it lacks realism, in spite of the obvious trouble which has been taken to give verisimilitude to settings, costumes and similar details. Realism in the cinema goes far deeper than that. It involves behaviour and attitude as well; a conformity of every piece of action with the real world.

Refugees, for instance, are seen to be filled with fear and apprehension, but it is very difficult to believe that the Nazi officials we see depicted could inspire such terror. Altogether they are a fancy dress crowd of inepts. It need not have diminished the comedy, and would certainly have increased sympathy for Pimpernel Smith and admiration for his exploits, if the Nazi system had been depicted more realistically and more grimly.

Worth Seeing

Among the films definitely being released in August there are four which you will probably find worth seeing.

Port Arthur, a Columbia picture, directed by Pierré O'Connell, is an espionage drama in which Danielle Darrieux plays the part of a Japanese girl, sister to the head of the Japanese spy system in Port Arthur and married to Boris (Anton Walbrook) the commander of a Russian destroyer. This drama of divided loyalties with a tragic ending may not be to everybody's taste and is in many respects not above criticism; it has however some excellent shots of the Japanese army scaling heights to take a fort.

The Lady from Cheyenne (G.F.D.), a Frank Lloyd film starring Loretta Young, is another chapter in the film sagas of the development of America's mighty West. This time we are shown how a young school teacher in Wyoming seeks to unsaddle a local gang of brigands by the rather novel method of securing suffrage for women so that they can sit on local juries.

Danny Boy (Butchers) is a British film directed by Oswald Mitchell with Wilfred Lawson, John Warwick, Ann Todd and Grant Tyler in the principal roles. The story is a rather simple sentimental one of a successful stage artiste who leaves New York to find her husband and son who are out of work in London. The interest of this film lies chiefly in the fact that it contains some scenes of London in the blitz which are well photographed and realistic enough to bring one very much down to earth.

That Night in Rio (20th Century Fox) is a follow-up of *Down Argentine Way* which you may have seen. That is to say, it is a Technicolor musical on the magnificent scale, directed by Irving Cummings, with Don Ameche, the scintillating cabaret singer Carmen Miranda, and Alice Faye (who appears to be the only important change in the team).

"IT HAPPENED TO ME"

The Story of "B"

Readers are invited to contribute to this feature. The passport to publication is a novel, humorous or out-of-the-way movie experience.

"OUT of the four scenarios received, the committee has decided to accept Mr. Eves' effort, entitled 'B.'" Applause. "I take it you will direct it yourself, George?" I blushed my assent.

The next meeting at the club was a dazzling affair. The cast was to be chosen. I faced a roomful of folk, who alternately delved into rustling sheets of scenario and fixed an earnest gaze in my direction. Eighteen actors and technicians were eventually chosen, but no one volunteered for continuity or assistant direction. Then, when most everything had been nicely settled, the chief cameraman woefully advised me that he could not 'do justice to the script.' Wise man! He saw farther than I did.

The next three Saturdays a party of us worked in a garage near the club room building and painting scenery—wood flats 6ft. by 4ft., including door and window sections.

A Memorable Night

August 24th, 1934. A memorable night for me. A scene representing the interior of a police station had been erected in the studio. There was a light streaming through the window, while a real tree, uprooted from outside, cast waving shadows across the police sergeant's desk. Cables wriggled over the floor. A barrage of questions from everyone: "Is my make-up too dark?" "Do I have to say the words or just mouth them?" At last some sort of order out of the chaos while the assistant cameramen juggled with exposure meters, said they read f/6 and decided to shoot at f/1.5.

By 8.20 we had taken the first shot. By 9.30 we had two more. Meanwhile I was getting enough suggestions from cast and technicians to have written two completely new scenarios. At 11 p.m., with six shots finished, I decided to call it a day. Blonde starlet and escort awaited me outside the door. Both handed me their scripts. They regretted they could take no further part in the production because they were not cast alongside each other. With heavy heart I thought of the sixty feet of film I had just taken of the lady. But I need not have been

so put about. When the two spools came back from the processing station there was not the ghost of an image anywhere on them. Someone had forgotten to take off the lens cap.

Apart from difficulty with fuses, the next meeting, a week later, was highly successful. At the following one we were to screen the first three spools so far taken. There was quite an excited crowd milling outside the door of the studio when I got there. The secretary had failed to turn up with the keys. But some thirty of us repaired (in three cars) to the chairman's house and saw the film there. It was reasonably good.

For several weeks the work proceeded with a large measure of success. Then the inevitable happened. The social bug bit the members. They wanted whist drives, table tennis tournaments, darts, dances; but they got none of these things, for we were suddenly served with notice to quit the studio.

We searched for weeks for new premises and eventually hit upon a disused printing works which was nearly knee-deep in paper. Out of the chaos there emerged a theatre seating 60, a studio and a lounge. Thanks to our generous chairman we had, I think, premises second to none.

Exciting Car Chase

Once again we turned to the picture. The summer was now upon us, so we decided to film the exteriors. Our first Sunday in the country was a great success; we exposed six spools and results were 100%. The second Sunday wasn't so good. One of the ladies had failed to turn up so we did other shots at a suburban garage, and from there to the by-pass for an exciting car chase. I was following ten yards behind the villain's Sports M.G., which was doing 70 m.p.h., when its rear number plate bounced off, spun into the air and seemed to be on the point of dashing through our windscreen. But it missed.

On to a neighbouring common where we were about to commence operations, when we discovered that Star No. 2 was also missing. She turned up an hour later, explaining that she had been phoning her fiancé, but by now it was raining fast, so we abandoned shooting for the day.

From now on the call of holidays was the syren voice that wooed away members of the cast, but a few of us spent some pleasant Saturday afternoons filming the less important scenes. I still remember one of them with a chuckle. The scene was a police station, from which the villain was supposed to be escaping. He dashed down the steps three at a time, tripped up over the lead of a dog and fell into the path of a girl on a cycle who

swerved and crashed into a milk cart. But luckily no bones were broken.

Soon after Star No. 2 left the district, so I re-wrote the second half of the scenario, omitting her part. But interest in the club was now fast diminishing. Those who wanted social activities stayed away, and the entire make-up department forsook us for the local *palais de danse*. Often it was impossible to take a single shot on club nights, and it was being borne in upon me that the sooner I completed the film the better.

At last, late autumn, and the remaining members—six of us—went down into Kent to shoot the last sequence at a wayside station. I duly presented my official pass, which gave me permission to film the company's property, including the signal box. But we couldn't find that signal box. The two look-out men the company had provided for us explained: "They pulled it down the day before yesterday, sir." I reshuffled the scenario on the spot, but shooting proved difficult because something had gone wrong on the main line and all traffic was diverted onto our branch line.

Absorbing Task

In the weeks that followed I was occupied in editing the film—a difficult but absorbing task. The camerawork was good but direction and continuity were indifferent. Then the great night of the premiere arrived. Members and friends turned up in force. There were flags, flowers and flagons. When "The End" appeared upon the screen there was terrific applause. I was not sure if the audience was applauding the film or the fact that it had ended, for at least I was painfully aware of its many short-comings.

Someone pushed me to the front and told me to make a speech. I spoke a few inanities, but what I should have said was: "Ladies and gentlemen, never again! From now on I plough a lonely furrow."

I now work alone, and like it. Since the production of "B" I have been fortunate enough to share the A.C.W. "Week-End" competition award and have won a gold medal and an A.C.W. plaque. For the confused advice and haphazard working of club members I have exchanged the sober and direct advice of A.C.W. It has taught me whatever I know about cine and—what is most important—it has given me the correct outlook, for it never over-rates a value or under-estimates it. It hits the centre. And that is what I want to do in my filming.

GEORGE W. EVES.

(It now rests with the member of a club who *has* gained both profit and pleasure from his membership to provide a counterblast to Mr. Eves' views! —EDITOR).

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Letters to the Editor

IDEAL CINE EQUIPMENT

Sir,—The thirty-year-old prophecy on the development of home movies mentioned by your correspondent, H. D. Williams, in the June issue, suggests that the responsible amateur might find it profitable to predict improvements in equipment which he personally would like to see. At present it seems that practically no new apparatus is being made, but assuredly there will be a great impetus after the war, so that now is the time to let manufacturers know just what kind of equipment we need.

Owing to force of circumstance I am now more interested in projection than in camera work. I should like to have a reasonably priced projector with the following refinements: carrying case to serve as blimp, to deaden noise; optical framing; transformer as a standard item of equipment; safety device to stop motor immediately (a) film fouls gate or sprockets: (b) take-up spool fails to function; shutter fitted to lens to avoid white screen at beginning and end of reels; auxiliary equipment, with magnifier, for using projector for editing, but cutting out motor; all controls at rear of machine, with possibly a pilot light and small mirror at side so that operator can keep an eye on film transit from that position.

I feel it would be very interesting to have readers' suggestions for the attainment of their ideal in all kinds of cine equipment, but would suggest that all ideas should be kept within the bounds of practicability.

L. E. ARMSTRONG.

EDUCATIONAL FILMS—AN OFFER TO CLUBS

Sir,—I read with very great interest the article in your June number on "Regional Libraries" and was particularly pleased with your remark that teachers should make contact with existing amateur organisations in order to improve the standard of amateur educational films. This has long been the policy of the British Film Institute, and as I have to cover the whole of the country advising local education authorities and teachers on the use of educational films, I feel that much can be done, both with the amateur film societies and with the teachers to improve the supply of such films in quantity and in quality. The former, with the facilities at their command, could do much to increase the number of really good educational films available, but it is absolutely essential that they should have the experience of qualified practising teachers

The Editor is always glad to hear from readers, but does not necessarily endorse the views expressed.

if the films they produce are to be of real value in schools.

The technique of the teaching film is a very recent development and differs in many ways from the entertainment film, a point which is often missed, even by the large producing companies, and one which has considerably retarded the progress of the film as an aid to teaching.

As my work is devoted entirely to assisting the development of the use of films in schools, I should be most happy to address any amateur film society on the problems of films in school if they would care to get in touch with me.

143, Ridgacre Rd.,
Quinton,
Birmingham, 32.

BERNARD E. GILLETT
(Educational Director,
B.F.I.)

ODD SHOTS

Sir,—Appos the notes on "Cameo Films from Odd Shots" (July issue) it is interesting to recall that using up cuttings has apparently always exercised professional ingenuity. Mr. A. C. Lescarbourea, in his "Behind the Motion-Picture Screen" (published in 1920) writes this sinister paragraph:—

The footage thrown out in cutting a production is not necessarily wasted. Many a progressive producer makes good use of these cuttings in subsequent photoplays, either running them in as scenes of a new photoplay, or working the cuttings themselves into a production based entirely on them. Thus there are releases issued of famous actors long after they have left a certain company. The public is told that these releases are positively new. Cuttings are the answer to this mystery. The film company has merely looked over its collection of cuttings and by no mean ingenuity has constructed some sort of photoplay from the odds-and-ends of former action.

This would not be too easy with talkies, but one must admit having seen films that had all the appearance of having been manufactured by an equivalently disorderly method!

S.T.

MILLER CINE CAMERAS

Messrs. Actina, Ltd. (19, Woodstock Street, New Bond Street, London, W.1) announce that they have secured a fairly large quantity of new Miller 9.5 mm. cameras. The circumstances are such that, 'for the duration,' Actina can be considered as the sole distributors of these cameras for home and abroad, the Miller Cine Camera Co. now being engaged exclusively on other work. Prices are: camera with f/3.5 lens, £9/16/0; f/1.9, £15/8/0.

Round the Societies

THREE members of the **Bradford Cine Circle** acted as judges for **Keighley and District Cine Circle's** annual competition. The films were shown to a large audience (including a number of newcomers). The Fortune trophy was won by Dr. Black ("Travel in Ireland") and silver spoons were presented for "Carefree Days in North Wales" (J. Barker) and "Go To It" (A. H. Haggas). A musical accompaniment was provided for each of the entries.

Excursions have been made recently to Bolton Abbey and Hardcastle Craggs, some film being exposed on each occasion.

* * *

Ten films were entered by five societies for the annual competition held by the **Federation of Cinematograph Societies** (Hon. Sec.: G. Wain, 170, Dowson Road, Hyde, Cheshire). Not all of the films were club productions, some being by individual members.

The challenge cup was awarded jointly to the **Hyde C.S.** ("Old China," 16mm.) and the **Manchester Film Unit** ("Very First Aid—Bleeding," 9.5mm.). The first is a cartoon, of about 200 ft., telling the story of the Willow Pattern legend. There is some excellent work in it, and some of the close-ups, in particular, are remarkably fine, but it lacks that air of fantasy, that flaunting of the laws of time and space, that should be inherent in a 'story' cartoon. One feels that all of the situations presented could quite well have been acted by real people. But the film is, nevertheless, a most creditable production and represents a tremendous amount of work.

"Very First Aid—Bleeding" is a clear exposition, principally by diagrams, of the basic treatment of injuries, the diagrams being used to show what happens to the nervous system and the blood stream when various injuries are sustained, and therefore why certain forms of treatment are adopted.

"At School in Wartime"—9.5mm. (Hyde C.S.) and "Conway River"—16mm. colour (Salford C.S.) were each awarded certificates. The school film is a well handled production, with neat continuity, showing a number of schoolboy activities (gardening, pet-keeping, handicrafts, art work, physical culture, etc.) related to new conditions brought about by the war. There are many beautiful shots in "Conway River," but it missed the prize-winning class through

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somewhat static treatment.

The winning films were shown on June 28th at the College of Technology, Manchester. The Federation chairman, T. S. Lutas, A.R.P.S., travelled from London to be present at the show. The former hon. sec., F. P. Barnitt, who is now in the R.A.F. (and who came from Derby) also attended and presented the challenge trophy and certificates of merit.

The only other important competition held this year was the Scottish Film Festival. In the fiction class the Alfred Hitchcock cup and £10 prize were won by **Ace Movies** for "The Miracle" (one of the 1939 A.C.W. "Ten Best"). Other awards were: Non-fiction class: Victor Saville trophy and £10 presented by the **Glasgow F.S.** for "Marseilles," by Matthew Nathan; classroom films: Glasgow cup presented by R. M. Allardyce and £5 presented by the Scottish Educational Association—"Salmon Fishing in Skye" (Glasgow Group of the Scottish Educational Film Association); colour class: British Film Institute cup and £5 presented by A. B. King—"Tally Ho!" (J. P. J. Chapman); Scottish class: Andrew Buchanan cup and £5 presented by the Cosmo Cinema—"Deer-stalking in War-Time" (J. B. McDonald); novice class: R. Bryce Walker cup and £5 presented by C. A. Oakley—"Capetown to Cairo" (J. T. Airdrie). The Scottish Film Council made a special two guinea award to Frank Marshall (former "Ten Best" winner) for "An Apple a Day."

There were 59 entries, rather fewer than the entry of previous years. Six of the films were shown at the final session at the Lyric Theatre, Glasgow.

* * *

Isis Motion Pictures (Hon. Sec.: P. S. G. Spencer, Oak Dene, Carr Road, Burnley, Lancs.) are seeking a script for a story film of about 300 ft., to be made next term, and would be glad of the offer of any scripts that readers may have by them.

Negotiations are now in progress to secure suitable premises (the club is at Oxford), and new members from town or University will be welcomed. It is hoped next term to hold regular film shows and to bring back some of the classics of the screen.

* * *

Since the outbreak of the war, the **A.C.S. of India** (Hon. Sec.: S. Jepson, Scouts' Hut, Esplanade Maidan, Bombay) has more or less suspended activities, but is now to resume monthly meetings. Last year there were 115 members (more than half of them owning cameras) and membership to-day is practically the same. It is possible that the

"Ten Best" Competition will be reinstituted, although the prizes awarded by the former Bombay Government have now been withdrawn.

* * *

From a recent copy of "The Cameraman," official organ of the Metropolitan C.C. (970, High Street, Armadale, S.E.3, Victoria, Australia) we note that a trick film, "Fate," is in course of production. It is stated that all club productions in hand will be carried through, since it is not anticipated that there will be any shortage of film.

When members wish to throw a party, but do not care to disarrange the home for it, they book the club theatre (with facilities for suppers and refreshment) for the modest fee of 5/-.

Making a Flip Book

(Continued from page 47)

under the edge of a ruler in the usual way, so as to flatten them, and finally press them in an old letter press or between heavy books.

If you are using an ordinary print trimmer you will find it an advantage for the first cut to have a light under the cutting edge, so that you can cut every print dead on the frame line, which we arranged to appear on each one. A simple method of arranging this is shown in Fig. 3. You should run through the entire set of prints making this one cut on all of them. The next cut to make is the narrow margin on the short side of the frame; this is made by means of the margin guide fitted to most trimmers. On my own model this guide takes the form of a thin wire held slightly above the baseboard, but if your trimmer has no guide a similar device can easily be fitted in a few moments.

The third cut lies along the second long side (bottom of picture) and this time we fix a drawing pin in the trimming board to act as an additional gauge. Our prints are to be 1" deep when cut, and the pin is pressed halfway home into the baseboard at 1" from the cutting edge and about 2" down from the head rule. By this simple gauge we can be sure of alignment. The same device is adopted for the fourth cut, but we must move the pin so that it is $2\frac{3}{4}$ " from the cutting edge and $\frac{1}{2}$ " from the rule. When this final cut has been made our prints are ready for binding.

All we have now to do is to assemble the set of prints in the correct number sequence, and to fasten them together as near to the extremity of the wider margin as possible. This can be done with ordinary brass paper fasteners or with bifurcated rivets or by taking the booklet to a jobbing printer and asking him to put a heavy staple through the lot.

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... £85 0 0
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- 9.5 Ditmar Optical Meter Model, f/2.9, new ... £13 17 6
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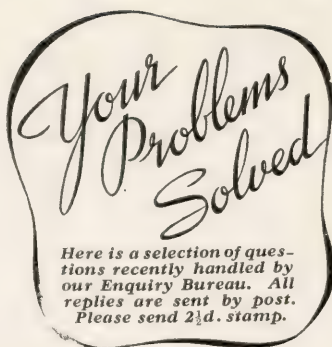
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I have just completed a 9.5mm. film which I want to have copied. Unfortunately, one cannot make a decent join on 9.5mm. because a frame has to be mutilated by the scraping away of the emulsion. When the film is 'duped' will these joins be blacked out?

—F.R.

Unless you give particular instructions to black-out the film at joins, and pay for this additional work, the print you obtain will be as nearly as possible an exact replica of the original, with the interrupted frames showing.

You can avoid the trouble by trimming the two adjacent film ends to the limits of the frame, butting them together, and joining them by patching on the shiny side with a piece of clear film with a sprocket hole in its centre. We mean a patch something like the mending pieces supplied by Pathescope for mending torn sprocket holes, but the full width of the film, and extending about half a frame either side of the sprocket. You can prepare old positive prints for this purpose by soaking off the emulsion.

FRAMING VARIATIONS

At a recent show I gave, three or four 16mm. films from different libraries were screened. Each time a new film was projected, the picture became out of rack, necessitating the usual up and down movement. Since my projector is not equipped with optical framing, the picture consequently went off the screen. It was, of course, possible to tilt the projector to compensate, but this resulted in a general jarring about of the picture. Can nothing be done to standardise the framing lines?—P.M.P.

In theory, all sub-standard films which have only one perforation or one horizontal pair of perforations per frame, should not need frame adjustment in projection. In fact, a number of causes of variation exist. The greatest of these is the placing of the intermittent claw an appreciable distance

below the gate, combined with the fact that the film itself undergoes expansion and contraction continuously during its life. The film will always be pulled down to the same point *where the claw is*, but the greater the distance of the claw from the actual picture aperture, the greater the error on the screen.

The ideal would be to have the claw alongside the picture aperture, but other considerations of design may make this arrangement undesirable. Failing this, the best alternative is to choose a projector with framing devices which do not move the whole of the projected area on the screen, but merely adjust the position of the picture within that area. This is sometimes known as optical framing, and can be accomplished by moving the film aperture and lens up and down together. There is a change of position on the screen, but it represents only a few millimetres. Another method is to alter the throw of the intermittent claw. This can be done while running.

AREA COVERED BY LENSES

H.H.—Given a condition under which the size of negative is limited within certain well defined boundaries, then the area of the subject which is recorded within those boundaries is inversely proportional to the focal length of the lens used. If we assume that each lens is used at infinity focus (and that is sufficiently accurate for our present requirement) then it is easily possible to show the covering angle. Draw a line representing the dimension of the long side of your negative and erect from its centre a perpendicular equivalent in dimensions to the focal length of the lens. Now draw lines from the outer ends to join the outer end of your perpendicular, and you have a representation of the covering angle of the lens, for the long side of the negative. A similar diagram can be prepared for the short side of the negative, using the centre of the same base line. The two lines can be produced to any desired length for convenience in use.

It will easily be seen from the foregoing that, in order to cover a larger area of the subject from a given viewpoint, a shorter focus, wider angle lens must be used. 15mm. focal length would be suitable for your purpose, but would necessitate modification of the viewfinder to cover a larger field.

May we suggest that, if you are having difficulty in securing service from the makers of the camera, you might be able to obtain what you want by fixing a folding direct-vision finder on top of your camera, and then masking down to cover the same area as your new lens. It is difficult to get special optical and photographic work done to order these days.

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